

Advice to Youth:

OR, *Exp. Poetry vol 14.*

INSTRUCTIONS

FOR

Young MEN

AND

MAIDS.

by Thomas Gill, the Blind Man of St. Ed-
monds-Bury, Suffolk.

L O N D O N :

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Service to Youth:

QUESTIONS

YOUNG MEN



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TO ALL

Young People

Of either Sex, and every State,
This little Work I Dedicate.

Young Men and Maids here I Rehearse
Some Documents and Rules in Verse,
That so what's Good may please your Palates,
As well as idle Songs or Ballads.
And now if you would be so kind
To Buy this Book of one that's Blind,
You'll do an Act of Charity,
And benefit your selves and me:
The Purchase of it is but small,
You have it for a Penny all;
You may give more for't if you will,
I never take such Actions ill.
And it contains as good Advice,
As larger Books of greater Price.
It will teach you true and solid Wit,
If you'll but Read and Practice it.
It tells you what is best to do
In every Thing concerning you

A 2

And

The Dedication.

*And how you may go safe and sound,
Altho' with Dangers compass'd round.
'Twill keep you free from Cares and Troubles,
That vex poor Worldly Souls for Bubbles.
It tells you how you may possess
Content, and Peace, and Happiness.
Substantial Goods it lets you know
From such as seem, but are not so;
And those deceitful Arts it shows,
That leads so many by the Nose.
It tells, (tho' now your Stock be small,)
How you may get good Portions all,
And gain a Spouse, Rich, Fair, and Young,
That loves you tenderly and long.
All this my little Book will do,
Except the Hindrance be in you;
And if you think I tell a Lie,
Pray Purchase it, and Read and Try.*

A Dialogue between an Old Man and a Young One.

The Introduction.

Old Man. **Y**oung Man attend a while to what
 I'll tell you how to shun each (I say,
 (dang'rous Way,
 What Things you ought to learn and most approve,
 And whom 'tis best to seek, to court and love ;
 How you may happy be, and truly wise,
 And gain Immortal Joys above the Skies ;
 These Rules I give in short, because I know
 You love such serious Matters should be so.

Young Man. I thank you, Sir, but pray what makes
 (you be }

So Kind and so Sollicitous for me?

Old Man. 'Tis purely the Effect of Charity.
 For by Experience and Example too,
 I know none want Instructions more than you.
 Besides, we have it from the Mouth of Truth,
 Man's Heart is prone to Evil from his Youth.

And Custom and Example, as we see,
 Have given Vice so great Authority,
 That there is Need betimes your Mind to season
 With solid Principles of Faith and Reason,
 Which strip Corruption off the Mask it wears,
 And then how vile and ugly Vice appears?
 Whilst Virtue with its real Charms will please ye,
 Its Rules appear most just, its Practice easie;
 In which you'll find such solid Peace and Joy,
 As neither Time nor Fortune can destroy.

C H A P. I.

Of the Necessity of a Guide.

Young Man. **W**ELL, what's the first Advice you'll
 (give me pray
 In order to attain to what you
 (say

Old Man. The same I would to Travelling Strangers
 Have difficult and dang'rous Ways to go, (wh
 Where if they fail, or their right Road forsake,
 Their Life is hazarded by that Mistake.
 Like these you should be careful to provide
 Some Good, Discreet, and Well-experienc'd Guide
 And having happily found such a one,
 Consult with him in all that's to be done.

Young Man. But, Sir, where should I get me such
 Some may refuse, some not be qualify'd. (Guide

Old Man. As to your Temporal Concerns no doubt
 Some honest Layman may be singled out,
 That's fit to undertake this Friendly Task,
 And will perform it if you do but ask.

But as to your Immortal Soul's Concern,
 This from some Clergyman you ought to learn.
 To Pastors God the Charge of Souls has given,
 And you will follow the Decree of Heaven,
 If to their Care and Conduct you submit ;
 And tho' the first you meet may not be fit,
 Yet in that Rank there cannot wanting be
 Those who by Prudence, Zeal, and Piety,
 For such a Charge are duly qualify'd,
 Chuse one of these, and let him be your Guide ;
 Tell him sincerely all your Inclinations,
 Desires, Affections, Passions and Temptations ;
 Embrace his Counsels, yield to what he says,
 And follow his Advice in all your Ways.

Young Man. This certainly must be a great Restraint.

Old Man. What then? You have no Reason for Com-
 'Tis fit you should restrain your roving Will, (plaint.
 Since Nature strongly pushes you to Ill ;
 And therefore thus the Holy Prophet spoke,
 'Tis good for Man in Youth to bear the Yoke.
 And pray how many Youngsters do you see
 Undone betimes by too much Liberty ?
 Then can you hope for better Fate if you !
 As eagerly your own Desires pursue ;
 Of your own Wit and Conduct over-bold,
 Reject Advice, and hate to be controul'd ?
 How rash and foolish such Proceedings are,
 Both Learned Men and Holy Writ declare.
 He that will have no Master, nor no Rule,
 But teach himself, his Scholar is a Fool. [S. Ber. Prov.
 The Way of Fools is right in their own Eyes,
 But he hears others Counsel who is wise ;
 And of the wicked Woman Wisdom speaks,
 That she the Guide of her blind Youth forsakes. [Prov.

2. 17.

It

It also says, who that he turns his Mind
 From good Advice shall certain Ruin find;
 And thus too late complain with inward smart,
 How did I hate Instruction, and my Heart [Prov.
 Despise Reproof, my Teachers disobey'd,
 And minded not what my Instructors said.
 Now if the scornful Name of Fool you hate,
 Or if you would avoid a wretched Fate,
 Be wisely rul'd before it be too late. }

C H A P. II.

Of the true Judgment of Worldly Things.

Young Man. WELL, Sir, I yield, and make no
 [more Objections,
 But till I get some Friend, by
 (whose Directions

I may proceed in all I ought to do,
 Pray let me hear a little more from you.

Old Man. Well then, I have observ'd what Dangers
 (springs
 From wrong Conceits, or Thoughts of Worldly
 The Goods and Evils of this Life we find (Things;
 Make false Impressions on a Worldly Mind.
 Of these Things therefore early let your Breast
 With Christian true Idea's be possess'd,
 That so you may a settled Judgment square,
 Not as they seem, but as they truly are.

Young Man. Pray some of them particularly name,
 And shew how these Idea's I should frame.

Old Man. Preferment, Honours, Titles, Worldly
 Treasures
 Fine Cloaths, good Cheer, Ease, Liberty and Pleasures

These

These Things by foolish Worldlings are admir'd,
 Too much esteem'd, and earnestly desir'd;
 Whereas a Prudent Christian Man, who hath
 His Reason guided by the Light of Faith,
 Will look on them as vain and passing Things,
 Which Accident or Time to Ruin brings.
 That if they prove as lasting as our Breath,
 They must be all left at the Hour of Death;
 And who can tell how near that Time may be,
 Which wafts us hence to vast Eternity?
 And then what Woes, what Anguish will betide
 Their Souls who Temporal Goods have misapply'd, }
 To feed their Passions, Appetites and Pride?
 'Tis very hard to make of them right Use,
 And when they are perverted, that Abuse
 Diverts Man from the End of his Creation,
 And proves his utter Ruin and Damnation.
 From these Idea's flow these just Conclusions,
 That Worldly Goods are dang'rous Delusions,
 By which the Mind of Man is oft ensnar'd,
 And therefore less to be desir'd than fear'd.
 Again, those Temp'ral Evils which we fear,
 With no such frightful Aspect will appear,
 When we consider they will shortly end
 By Death, or speedier Change, which God can send.
 That they are Blessings Providence has given,
 To make us loath the World, and long for Heaven;
 To which a safer Way there can be none,
 Than that which Christ and all his Saints have gone.
 But you by this Similitude may learn,
 How much these Things a Christian should concern.
 Suppose one takes a Journey for the space
 Of Half an Hour to some convenient Place,
 Where all Accommodations he shall find
 To serve the Body, and delight the Mind,

There

There he intends to make his Residence,
 And never till his Death depart from thence,
 Would you not think this Person very weak,
 Should he much Bustle or Provision make,
 For such a Journey wondrous Care express
 About his Train, his Equipage and Dress:
 Consider whether he should Walk or Ride,
 And fear what Difficulties may betide;
 Be troubled lest it Blow, or Snow, or Rain,
 And of the rugged dirty Road complain;
 Be in a great Concern upon the Way
 Who sees him pass, and what they think or say?
 What Sober Man would act in this strange sort,
 Considering that the Journey is so short.
 The Journey of our Life must shorter be,
 Compar'd to the End of it, Eternity.
 And if the right and safest Way we take,
 Why should we grieve tho' we the Journey make
 In Difficulties, Labours, Pains and Losses,
 In Poverty and Rags, Contempts and Crosses,
 Since at the Journey's end they all will cease,
 And ne'er be thought on more, but to encrease
 Our Everlasting Glory, Joy and Peace?

Young Man. Sir, this Discourse has much affected
 And now by Faith and Reason's Light I see, (me,
 (Whatever Worldlings, Thoughts or Practice be,) }
 There's nothing truly worthy Estimation,
 Or Good, but what advances our Salvation;
 Nor is there ought can real Evils be,
 But what may cause Eternal Misery.

C H A P. III.

Of Books and Company.

Old Man. **B**UT since this Truth, of which you
 (are convicted,
 By Nature and the World is contra-
 (dicted,

It will be forgot, or lose its force, you'll find,
 Unless you fix it deeply in your Mind,
 And frequently the Thoughts of it renew,
 To make it vigorous and lasting too,
 And have an Influence on all you do. }
 To compass this your chiefeſt Care muſt be
 To read good Books, and keep good Company.
 Read often then ſuch Books, as are deſign'd
 With Senſe of this great Truth to ſtrike the Mind,
 That after this ſhort Life we muſt poſſeſs
 Eternal Miſery, or Happineſs.
 True Hiſtories, by the Examples they recite,
 Afford much Benefit, and much Delight ;
 Then read not Plays, love Stories or Romances,
 The Mind they ſoften, and create wild Fancies ;
 The former good Impreſſions they efface,
 And Vice or Vanity poſſeſs their Place ;
 Frequent their Company whoſe Converſation
 May Profit yield as well as Recreation ;
 Whoſe ſober Mirth offends not Modeſty,
 From ſmuttery Puns, lewd Talk, and Jeſting free, }
 And irreligious Scoffs or Railery.
 All ſuch as are ſo Loofe, or ſo Prophane,
 Avoid as Plagues of Youth, and Virtue's Bane ;
 Deſt and fly from them as you would fly
 From Tygers, Serpents, or the Baſiliſk's Eye.

Theſe

These murdering Creatures less mischievous are,
 The Body they may poyson, kill or tear ;
 But bad Companions have the cursed Art
 T' infect the Mind, and kill the Nobler Part:
 And tho' at present you abhor their Vice,
 If you to shun their Presence be not nice,
 Because their Wit and Mirth your Fancy please,
 They'll certainly corrupt you by degrees :
 Besides, these looser Sparks, if you frequent
 Vain, Idle Company, whose Time is spent
 In Drinking, Gaming, and Divertisement,
 Their ill Impressions you will soon receive,
 And what is Serious will no Relish have.
 Your most desir'd Improvement then will be
 In what may please your Sparkish Company.
 Each Thought or Word that their vain Humours fit,
 Or makes them laugh, you'll count a lucky Hit,
 And thus pretend to be a Modish Wit,
 Who Piety and Virtue ridicules,
 And call reserv'd good Men dull sober Fools.
Young Man. If Youth so cautious and reserv'd must be,
 To all but those that with your Rules agree,
 The World so vicious and so vain is grown,
 They must, like Hermits, always live alone.
Old Man. Suppose some Charm invited you to enter
 A House that had the Plague, pray would you venture ?
 Or were you told there's Poyson in the Meat
 Which you are taking, would you dare to Eat ?
 Or were you well assur'd that Quick sands lay
 Before you, would you still go on that Way ?
Young Man. No, certainly he must be Mad indeed,
 That in so rash a Manner would proceed.
Old Man. Yet greater Dangers from ill Company
 Which Soul and Body both to Ruin bring. (spring,

How

How many sad Examples may you see
 Of hopeful Youth, bred up in Piety,
 And well-dispos'd to Virtue formerly,
 Debauch'd by loose Companions, now engage
 In all the reigning Vices of the Age.
 The Strength of this Contagion is so known,
 That 'tis the safest Way to keep alone;
 Unless you can such Conversation find
 As may divert, and not debauch, the Mind.

CHAP. IV.

Of Divertisements.

Young Man. **W**ELL then, good Sir, I find
 (you will consent
 That Youth should sometimes
 (have Divertisement.

Old Man. As far as they encourage Industry,
 Or beneficial to their Health may be.
 I am so far from offering to refuse them,
 That rather I encourage Youth to use them,
 That so with greater Vigour and Regard
 They may perform their Business afterward.
 But these Diversions must be Innocent,
 Your Thoughts on them must not be too much bent,
 Nor too much Time or Money on them spent.
 For you must give a strict Account One Day
 Of all those Means you squander now away.
 Play not at Games of Chance, as Cards or Dice,
 You'll lose (by not observing this Advice;)
 Your Money, Peace and Patience in a trice.
 Nor ever go to Publick Balls and Dances,
 Where am'rous Whispers, Gestures, Looks and Glances,

And

And other dang'rous Snares the Devil lays,
 To catch and ruin Souls a Thousand Ways ;
 But if you Dance sometimes, pray let it be
 With those you know in some good Family.

C H A P. V.
Of Sloth and Idleness.

Young Man. **Y**OU spoke just now as if it were a
 (Crime
 For Persons to mis-spēd or waste
 (their Time.

Old Man. Yes, as you must the doing ill avoid,
 So you must always seek to be employ'd.
 You can't imagine, nor can I express,
 What Mischief springs from Sloth and Idleness.
 The Devil always watches such Occasions,
 To assault your Soul with numerous Temptations.
 Then if your Circumstances be so good,
 That you have now no need to work for Food,
 Remember still you ought to work for Heaven,
 And that's the End for which your Time is given.
 A Lazy, Drowsie, Disposition hate,
 And never lye in Bed too long or late ;
 Consult not Inclination when to rise,
 Nor take more Rest than will for Health suffice.
 You dull your Brain by sleeping to Excess,
 Then rouse with speed, and shake off Sluggishness.
 From early Rising much Advantage springs
 To Soul and Body, Health and Wealth it brings.
 And he that will advance in Virtue's School,
 Or rise to Honour, must observe this Rule.
 Some Self-dēial it may be no doubt,
 But who can lead a Christian Life without ?

As soon as you are up be sure you pay
 To Heaven your Devotion every Day.
 If towards God your Duty you neglect,
 His Grace and Blessing how can you expect?
 Look in your Prayer-Book more than in your Glass,
 And let not too much Time in Dressing pass.

C H A P. VI.

Of Cloaths and Dressing.

Young Man. **A**Y, Sir, what say you to our Cloaths
 (and Dress?)

Old Man. We love to go genteel I must confess.
 And I'll comply so far with your Desire

As Cleanliness and Decency require;
 But never can allow of their Excess,
 That are extreemly Modish in their Dress.
 Nor theirs who cloath themselves at such a rate
 As much exceed their Quality or State.
 Nor theirs who cast much Time and Thought away,
 In pondering what will best become the Clay;
 And make it be by others as admir'd
 As 'tis in its own Eyes when so attir'd.
 Huge Wigs, much Ribbon, Lace and Furbelow's,
 Which now-a-days so load the Bells and Beaux,
 The Wearers to be pointed at expose. }
 In that by which they seek Esteem, 'tis lost
 With those whose Judgment they should value most.
 For what wise, sober Person can abide
 Such gaudy Vanity, and fluttering Pride?
 Since outward decking with such Cost and Art
 Betrays a light and empty Head and Heart,
 A Natural Beauty, void of Art, looks best,
 Apparell'd neatly, not too nicely dress.

C H A P.

C H A P. VII.

Of Diet.

Young Man. **B**UT tell us now, good Sir, what
 (Rules you think)
 We ought to practice as to Meat
 and Drink.

Old Man. Why then, if you will follow my Advice
 In Eating, be not Dainty, nor too Nice,
 But use your self to Plain and Common Diet,
 And you will reap no small Advantage by it;
 With all your Fare you'll be content and easie,
 And never trouble others much to please you.
 For change of Fortune you will be prepar'd,
 For tho' you eat well now, yet afterward
 Perhaps your Diet may be very hard.
 A Christian's Food should like his Physick be,
 Not for Delight, but for Necessity.
 To eat at seasonable Hours is best,
 Then Dine not late, nor have your Supper dress'd
 When Servants ought to go and take their Rest.
 Be sure you never Drink to an Excess,
 But hate that Swinish Sin of Drunkenness.
 'Tis grown a fashionable Vice I know,
 But not less Criminal for being so.
 And those Swil-tubs are most of all to blame,
 Who boast of it, and glory in their Shame.
 Young People all Occasions should decline,
 By which they come to love strong Drink or Wine.
 There may be need sometimes to drink One Cup
 To cheer your Heart, and raise your Spirits up;
 But if you go beyond, and take off Two,
 You'll covet more, and Three or Four won't do.

F I N I S.

